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Keywords: post-conflict education, community division, teacher identity, Northern Ireland, cultural encapsulation

(Word Count: 6,433)

Introduction

The 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland (NI) came to an end with the signing of the Belfast Agreement on Good Friday, 1998. For those under 21 the conflict is, literally, a life-time away. In contrast to the generation that preceded them, they will have grown up and lived their lives without the presence of the British army on the streets, without internment, security controls, car bombs or paramilitary assassinations. The daily manifestations of inter-communal violence may have receded into the past but the community divisions that fed the conflict endure.

It has been calculated that there are more than 100 *Peace Walls* within Belfast (Gormley-Heenan et al, 2013) – these often high, physical dividers separate those streets populated by Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist inhabitants from those where the Catholic/Nationalist/Republican community reside. The Peace Walls were put in place to avert the occurrence of sectarian hostilities at interfaces and their number has increased since the 1998 peace agreement (Gormley-Heenan et al, 2013). Political commitments have been made to their dismantling by 2023 (NI Executive, 2013) but this seems to be an unrealistic target and few of those living in their immediate shadow are optimistic about the consequences of their removal (Byrne et al, 2015).

Peace walls are not the only barriers that serve to demarcate the territories of the two dominant communities; the lives of the people of NI are separated in a multitude of other ways. Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2009) observed that 90% of those living in social housing inhabited single-identity[i] communities and that this figure rose to 93% in urban areas. Gray et al (2018, 177) noted that, although there has been a decline in the number of single-identity housing areas, "the levels of segregation have proven very slow to change" in spite of concerted efforts to encourage integrated housing.

In many respects the Protestant and Catholic communities inhabit different cultural and social landscapes, for example, Gaelic sports are organised around Catholic parish boundaries and have historically been associated with Irish self-determination – consequently few Protestants play or even understand the rules of Gaelic football and hurling. British sports (such as rugby union, hockey and cricket) have been portrayed by some Nationalists as "alien activities" (Sugden and Harvie, 1995). Where there is a

common interest in the same sport (e.g. local and international soccer) the two communities usually support different teams (Mitchell et al, 2016).

Language has been referred to as a 'Political Weapon' (O'Leary, 2014). The Irish language has traditionally been embraced and championed by the Republican movement, whilst Ulster-Scots has been promoted by some unionists as counterweight (Radford, 2001). Some recent initiatives to promote Irish as a shared language have, however, shown a degree of success (Mitchell and Miller, 2019).

Wright (1987, 1) proposed that the cumulative, combined effect of all of these factors had led to a pattern of internal boundaries that constitute an "ethnic frontier", where mutually exclusive communities, with separate and antagonistic identities, persistently compete for dominance in an ostensibly shared space. The enduring nature of this ethnic frontier was highlighted by Morrow (2011).

This ethnic separation arguably finds its most significant and enduring expression in schools.

The Separation of Education

The system of education inherited by the Northern Ireland Ministry of Education following the partition of Ireland in 1922 was largely denominational. The authors of the 1923 NI Education Act proposed that the existing array of (mainly) church-run schools would be replaced with a single, unified, non-denominational system. The 1923 Act also banned religious instruction during school hours and prohibited school authorities from taking religion into account in the appointing of teachers. Schools that chose to remain outside this new system would receive state funding according to a sliding scale – the less control the government had over the school the lower the level of funding that would be made available to it.

Protestant churches were dismayed by the Act's secularism and the Catholic authorities (already antipathetic towards the Northern Irish state) saw the new system as a direct attack on the schools that they managed. They considered the funding arrangements to be discriminatory and felt that their *ethos* could only be guaranteed if they were able to keep complete control of their schools (Farren, 1989).

The Government ceded to building pressure from the churches and, in 1925, certain aspects of the Act were radically amended; all schools in receipt of government funding would henceforth be *required* to provide "simple Bible instruction" and permission for employing authorities to use faith as a consideration in the appointment of teachers was granted (Bardon, 1992).

Thus, three classes of school emerged: (state-)Controlled – with a predominantly Protestant intake, Maintained (virtually all of which were managed by Catholic authorities) and Voluntary (private grammar schools – Catholic and non-denominational). Nearly a century later the school system in NI is still largely characterised by these divisions.

The Department of Education's school census recorded that, in the 2017-18 school year, 93% of pupils attended schools that were significantly separated according to ethnic identity. Ninety-six percent of pupils who attend schools under Catholic management (i.e. Maintained schools or voluntary Grammar schools run by Catholic orders) identify as Catholic and 93% of those who attend state Controlled schools are not Catholic. In addition, 4.4% of pupils were identified as being *newcomers,* 24% of whom were Polish. Newcomers were present in all school types but over 67% were being educated in primary schools (Department of Education, 2018).

Catholic beliefs, liturgical practices and ethos are integral to the culture of Maintained schools and Catholic voluntary grammar schools where an Irish cultural identity is fostered. Symbols and rituals associated with British-ness feature strongly in the less overtly confessional Controlled schools and non-denominational voluntary grammar schools (Furey et al, 2017). It is, for example, not uncommon for the British Union Flag to be flown on the premises of Controlled schools in NI.

Schools on both sides work to a common curriculum. Nevertheless, the provision of certain subjects is consistent with the ethnic identities described above e.g. whilst the Irish language is widely taught in Maintained schools and Catholic voluntary grammars it is offered only as an unexamined sixth form subject in a small number of non-denominational grammar schools (Gault, 2017).

The Separation of Teachers

Just as there is separation of pupils, so too research has indicated that the divided schools are staffed, on the whole, by a *community consistent* workforce of teachers i.e. that Catholic teachers were generally employed in the Maintained and Catholic grammar sectors and Protestant teachers in Controlled schools and non-denominational grammars (Table 1 and Table 2) (Darby et al, 1977; ECNI, 2004). Nelson (2010) and UNESCO (2015) identified that this pattern of deployment is supported and sustained through three areas of policy: the exception of teachers from the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (FETO, 1998), the policy requirement for all grant-aided schools to provide Religious Education, and the separation of Initial Teacher Education institutions.

The introduction of effective fair employment and anti-discrimination laws was among the demands made by the NI Civil Rights movement in the years immediately preceding the conflict. By way of response, Part 3 of the Northern Ireland Constitution Act (NICA) 1973 prohibited religious and political discrimination by the state. In 1976, the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act gave this law horizontal (i.e. person to person) effect and created the Fair Employment Agency (FEA). Section 37 of the 1976 Act excepted "employment as a teacher in a school", and "where the essential nature of the job requires it to be done by a person holding, or not holding, a particular religious belief… [or] a particular political opinion." The Act also required the FEA to keep this exception under review "with a view to considering whether… it is appropriate that any steps should be taken to further equality of opportunity in the employment of such teachers". The Act was revised in 1989. Compulsory workforce monitoring was introduced for those organisations employing more than ten employees. The teacher exception was, however, left in place.

In 1998, the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order (FETO), was brought into being following the Belfast Agreement. It consolidated existing fair employment law. Part 8: Article 71: Paragraph (1) states categorically that "this Order does not apply to or in relation to employment as a teacher in a school". The teacher exception has also been justified in European Law, "in order to maintain equality of opportunity in employment for teachers in Northern Ireland and reconcile the historical

divisions between the two main religious communities" (Article 15(2), Treaty of Amsterdam, 1999).

Schools are consequently legally entitled to use religious belief as grounds on which to discriminate between candidates for teaching posts. The exception has rarely been tested in law but a tribunal in 2007 confirmed that employing authorities are entitled to consider an applicant's faith with regard to both the initial recruitment of teachers *and* to promotion within a school (Debast and Flynn v Dr Malcolmson, Laurelhill Community College and SEELB). However, a 2010 Religious Discrimination case ruled in favour of a teacher whose religion had been used as a factor in selecting her for redundancy (Brudell v Board of Governors, Ballykelly Primary School & WELB).

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order, 1989, obliges all grant-aided schools to provide a daily act of collective worship and to provide religious education in line with a core syllabus (formulated by the four largest Christian denominations in NI). Those schools under Catholic management require that any teacher who has been employed to teach RE must be able to do so in line with the ethos of the school – this capability is demonstrated by the possession of a Certificate in Religious Education (CRE) that has been completed at an institution approved by the Catholic trustees.

Unlike those subject-specific teachers employed in post-primary schools, primary school teachers are generalists who are required to teach across the full curriculum – it follows that *all* primary school teachers will be required to teach RE[ii]. Following a review in 2013, the Department of Education accepted the CRE as a legitimate occupational requirement for primary school teachers, post-primary teachers of RE and those teachers with designated responsibility for pastoral care in Catholic schools (DE, 2013).

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is provided for aspiring school teachers at four institutions in NI: Queens University Belfast, St Mary's University College, Stranmillis University College and Ulster University. Stranmillis, St Mary's and Ulster provide courses specifically for those wishing to teach in primary schools. The St Mary's website states that the university college "exists to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of Catholic teachers", who can educate children "according to the principles of Catholic education". St Mary's is attended almost exclusively by Catholic students (Doyle, 2014).

It is recognised as an awarding body for the CRE and the course is provided for all BEd and PGCE students. Ulster (where the student body is more mixed) is also a recognised awarding body and the CRE is provided as an integral element of the primary school teaching course.

Stranmillis was established at the time of partition to provide a non-denominational teaching college within NI. This non-denominational status was initially opposed by both the Protestant churches (who resented the absence of clergy on the college's management committee) and Catholic authorities (Roulston and Dallat, 2001). Nevertheless, teachers who came through Stranmillis have, historically, gained employment in Controlled schools and the college has historically had a predominantly Protestant student population (the most recent figures available recorded a figure of 18% Catholic students (Doyle, 2014)). Until very recently, those Stranmillis students who wished to complete the CRE could only do so by distance-learning. From September 2019 student teachers enrolling at Stranmillis will be able to access a course on-site. The course is optional, will be taught by Stranmillis staff and validated through St Mary's.

Cultural Encapsulation

Skilbeck (1976) proposed that the separation of teachers in Northern Ireland was contributing to a situation where they had become "naïve bearers of culture", that they were unwittingly perpetuating sectarianism by failing to challenge cultural assumptions and ignorance. Roulston and Hansson (2019, p. 3) emphasise that very heavy segregation "along ethno-sectarian lines, particularly in residential areas and schools" remains a feature of Northern Ireland society. The comprehensive separation of communities that has been identified in NI is of course not unique to the region. In his writings on multi-cultural teaching, Banks (1994) appropriated the term *Cultural Encapsulation* from the disciplines of psychology and counselling to describe those individuals who had had limited engagement outside of their own ethnic grouping.

Howard (1999) looked at the practice of a number of white teachers working in multi-racial schools in USA. He documented the ways in which, in the absence of significant and sustained experiences shared with people of colour, white teachers had developed certain patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. He adopted the term Cultural

Encapsulation from Banks to describe this phenomenon. Where this encapsulation had occurred, teachers displayed both a lack of understanding of those who did not share their identity and an absence of awareness of how their own identity may be perceived by others.

Given the patterns identified in the literature, it is evident that many of those teaching in NI will have had their formative educational experiences in a primary school that was consistent with their community identity and will have transferred to a post-primary school in the same sector. From here they may have progressed to ITE in a University College where they will be amongst peers who share their community identity and where they will be prepared to teach in a school on 'their own side'. Cultural Encapsulation therefore offers an apposite theoretical construct to frame the school and career path taken by those teachers in NI who have remained on a pathway consistent with their community identity throughout all of their educational and professional journey.

It is important to recognise that those teachers who have followed such a path may nevertheless have capacity to foster educational change and promote mutual understanding and engagement with the *other*. Their cultural encapsulation is, after all, largely the product of systemic structures and policies. Similarly, it cannot be presupposed that the teacher who crosses over will necessarily draw on their *otherness* in their teaching.

The most recent investigation into the profile of the NI teaching workforce (ECNI, 2004) had documented that the NI teaching workforce was almost completely separated by community identity; it is, however, no longer current. In addition, the extent to which cultural encapsulation may be a feature of the current teaching workforce is unknown.

The project being reported here set out to secure contemporary data through which the distribution of teachers in NI by community background could be determined and thereby to address the research aim: to identify the patterns and pathways of community consistency in relation to teachers across the various sectors and to determine the extent to which teachers in NI could be described as being culturally encapsulated.

Research Method

One by-product of the teacher-exception from FETO (1998) is that, in contrast to almost every other occupation in NI, the authorities that employ teachers in NI schools are required to neither monitor the community composition of their workforce, nor to regularly review their policies and practices to ensure fairness towards Protestants and Catholics. Information on the community composition of the teaching workforce is not collected by the employing authorities.

Through C2K (the information and communication system for all NI schools) all teachers in NI have email addresses and access to the internet. Teachers may be reasonably assumed to be literate and to have capacity to give informed consent. They perfectly fit the research profile required for a population completing an on-line survey. Thus, to gain insight into the profile of the teachers employed in each of the various sectors, an internet-based survey was developed and structured using Qualtrics software in line with established best practice (Warren et al, 2014; Singer & Ye, 2013; Archer, 2008; Lauer et al, 2013). The first draft was tested with a cohort of final year ITE students and refined accordingly.

The final draft contained *closed* questions, which asked respondents to provide answers according to possibilities that had been predefined. Closed questions are particularly suitable for research that aims to "estimate the attributes of a population from a sample" (Greener, 2011, 41). The survey was structured in line with practice that had been established as encouraging participant completion, by grouping questions that relate to similar issues (Mercer et al, 2001) and by starting with more straightforward questions, keeping more personal or contentious issues to later sections (Denscombe, 2010).

An initial block of questions required teachers to provide *demographic information*, progressing from an initial uncontroversial line of questioning (age, gender) before inquiring into the more contentious issue of national identity. A second block of questions focussed on *background and career information*; respondents were asked to indicate the type of primary and post primary school that they had attended, the sector of the school in which they were currently employed and where they had undertaken their ITE. At no stage were respondents asked to provide the name of any school.

Limitations

Unfortunately, for the purposes of this research, teachers' email addresses are not available in the public realm. A range of approaches was therefore adopted to ensure the widest possible distribution and uptake of the survey. In the first instance, a link to the survey, together with information on the research, was emailed to the in-boxes of all mainstream primary and post-primary schools in NI. This link was also circulated by the four main teaching unions to their NI members.

It is recognised that the method adopted for distributing the on-line survey was far from ideal. Circulation was largely dependent upon the engagement of an unknown intermediary. On arrival into the school 'in-box' it is probable that the survey will have been completed in the first instance by a Principal, Vice Principal or senior teacher in order to determine whether or not it was worthy of being passed on to their teams – consequently s/he may or may not have further circulated the link to staff who may or may not have been encouraged to complete it. There is some evidence to suggest that, in some schools, the survey went no further than the first point of contact – completion rates were disproportionately higher for male teachers than would be expected given the gender profile of rank-and-file teachers and closer to the (higher) proportion of male teachers in school leadership posts.

Secondly, the survey was entitled 'Teaching Across the Divide'. This may have encouraged the first recipient in a school to target those teachers to whom the research seemed most relevant i.e. cross-over teachers. Furthermore, those who had crossed-over, may have felt more motivated than those who had remained community consistent to complete a survey that they felt related to them. Evidence to support this possible limitation may be indicated by the high rates of survey uptake by teachers in Integrated schools.

Returns were regularly monitored to determine trends and biases against several key categories – school sector, location, gender, community identity etc. The potential for the emergence of bias due to the factors identified above was recognised early in the data collection process and, as far as was practical, steps were taken to ameliorate their

potential impact. It remains, however, likely that these factors, in combination, will to some extent have affected the accuracy of the results obtained.

Data Analysis

The size of the sample achieved (n = 1,015) represents more than 5% of the current total teaching population (n=20,208) (GTCNI, 2018). The results were calculated as being 95% reliable with a 3% margin for error. No similar statistical parameters had been published for either of the two earlier quantitative studies.

Chi-square (χ^2) and Kramér's V statistic were applied in combination to test the strength of relationship between community identity, the sector in which the teachers were employed and the institution at which teachers undertook ITE.

The direct question, "are you a Catholic or a Protestant?" was not asked in the survey. Such a question carried the risk of increasing the level of non-response. As has been detailed, community affiliation in NI is not purely connected to faith. It is a complex configuration of various dimensions of identity. Therefore, in line with the method used by many employers in NI to monitor their compliance with fair employment legislation, 'primary school attended' was used as the determinant of each respondent's community identity. Those teachers who had attended a Maintained primary were categorised as having a *Catholic community* identity whilst those who had attended a Controlled primary were considered as having a *Protestant community* identity. It is however acknowledged that this approach may have resulted in a very small minority of respondents having been classified with an inaccurate community identity.

Integrated schools apply criteria to ensure a cross-community balance in their pupil intake, it was not therefore possible to allocate a community identity to those who had attended this type of school. Teachers who had attended Integrated primary schools were consequently assigned an *unaligned* identity.

The two local university colleges are linked with either side of the community divide in education: St Mary's[iii] and Stranmillis were categorised respectively as Catholic and Protestant. Other teacher education institutions (e.g. QUB, Ulster and teaching colleges in GB and RoI) were classified as being unaligned.

Of the employing sectors, Maintained primary, Maintained post primary and Catholic voluntary grammars were assigned a *Catholic* identity. Controlled primary, Controlled post primary and non-denominational grammars a *Protestant* identity. Integrated schools were unaligned.

The data from the survey was tested against a 'null hypothesis'.

> *Community identity does not play a significant role in the patterns of teacher deployment in the Northern Ireland education system.*

It was established that the sector in which primary school teachers are employed is statistically, significantly reflective of the sector of primary school that they had attended and the institution at which they had undertaken ITE. For teachers in the post-primary (non-selective and grammar) sectors, the profile of the primary schools attended was also consistent with the community divide - although this association was weaker than in the primary sector. ITE institution attended was not reflective of community identity.

The null hypothesis was consequently rejected, and an alternative hypothesis proposed:

> *Community identity plays a significant role in the patterns of teacher deployment in the Northern Ireland education system.*

Findings

The Qualtrics software enabled the filtering of responses from those teaching in Controlled schools (including those in non-denominational voluntary grammar schools) and Maintained schools (including those in Catholic voluntary grammar schools) against community identity specific variables (i.e. sector of primary and post primary school attended, ITE institution). By using a series of such filters it was possible to extract data on the profile of those respondents who were teaching in each of the various school management types. For the first time, it was possible to get an accurate picture (within the identified statistical limits) of the community composition of the teaching workforces in each sector.

Community Consistency and Teacher Deployment

Maintained schools and Catholic voluntary grammars employ a teaching cohort that is 86% community consistent – only 6% of teachers in these schools had been educated in Controlled primary schools. Maintained primary schools show the greatest level of community consistency of all school types and sectors – 93% of the staff employed in Maintained primary schools had attended Maintained primary schools in NI. Only 2% had been educated in Controlled schools or the preparatory departments of non-denominational voluntary grammar schools.

This pattern is slightly less pronounced in Catholic post-primary schools; 83% of teachers employed in Maintained post-primary schools and 72% of those in Catholic voluntary grammar schools had received their primary education in Maintained schools. Catholic voluntary grammar schools employ a higher percentage of teachers educated in Controlled primary schools (17%) than any other type of Catholic school.

Community consistency is also evident in Controlled schools and non-denominational voluntary grammars where the workforce-profile is dominated by teachers who had attended Controlled primary schools; 77% of teachers employed in these schools are community consistent and 14% had been educated in Maintained primary schools in NI.

In Controlled primary schools 85% of teachers are community consistent; 7% had been educated in Maintained primary schools. For Controlled post-primary schools the figures are 73% and 17% respectively. Non-denominational grammar schools show greater community diversity – 23% of teachers in these schools had been educated in a Maintained primary school and 65% were community consistent.

Integrated schools employ similar numbers of teachers who had been educated in community-specific primary schools (37% Maintained and 45% Controlled). Of those employed in Integrated schools, 9% had themselves attended an Integrated primary school. Only 1% of those working in Controlled and Maintained schools had attended an Integrated primary.

Given that Integrated schools are relatively recent arrivals on the scene (the first post-primary opened in 1981 and the first primary in 1985) and the fact that the Integrated

sector has grown relatively slowly, only a small number of pupils will have passed through three tiers of education and gone on to become teachers. It is nevertheless notable that the sectoral loyalty observed in non-Integrated schools seems also to be evident in the Integrated sector. Of those teachers who had attended Integrated primaries, 69% were practising in Integrated schools.

Across all sectors, teachers in NI gain employment most frequently in schools with the same community profile as that in which they themselves were educated. However, a not insignificant proportion of teachers employed in NI had received their primary education outside of the region: such teachers account for 8% of those employed in Controlled schools, 6% in Maintained schools and 9% in schools in the Integrated sector.

Community Consistency and Initial Teaching Education

The profile of the ITE institutions that teachers attended is also indicative of a link between community identity and sectoral allegiance: 86% (n=187) of the 217 teachers who had gained their teaching qualification at Stranmillis had attended a Controlled primary school in NI and less than 5% (n=10) had attended a Maintained primary school. Of the 201 teachers who had gained their teaching qualification at St Mary's, 93% (n=187) had attended a Maintained primary school and none had attended a Controlled primary school in NI.

All school types have a proportion of teachers who qualified from universities and colleges outside NI including: 20% (n=80) of teachers in Controlled schools, 24% (n=85) of teachers in Maintained schools and 28% (n=58) of teachers in Integrated schools. Given that fewer than 8% (n=79) of teachers who responded to the survey stated that they had been educated in a primary school outside NI, it is clear that many teachers currently employed in the region had left in order to pursue their studies and returned home to take up posts locally.

The pattern of ITE colleges attended outside NI is different for Protestant and Catholic teachers (Figure 1). The 23% (n=107) of Catholic teachers who had trained outside of NI, had, for the most part, attended institutions recognised by the Catholic trustees as providing an approved CRE. The most popular colleges were Liverpool Hope, which accounted for 14% (n=15), and St Mary's, Twickenham, 10% (n=11). When added

together with other notable clusters in Manchester Metropolitan College 8% (n=9), John Moore's Liverpool 8% (n=9) and St Andrew's Glasgow 7% (n=8) these five teacher colleges accounted for over half of all of those Catholic teachers who had trained outside NI. A further 11% (n=12) had undertaken their ITE in CRE compliant colleges in the Republic of Ireland.

Fewer Protestant teachers, 14% (n=58), had undertaken ITE outside NI. As had been observed with the Catholic teachers, colleges in the North-West of England were popular; 28% (n=13) had attended colleges in Liverpool and Manchester. Three of the colleges listed above as having been most patronised by Catholic teachers (Liverpool Hope, John Moore's and Manchester Met) account for 11% (n=7) of those Protestant teachers who had attended a GB institution – no Protestant teacher was identified as having attended Twickenham or St Andrew's, Glasgow. No other single institution accounted for more than 3% of those Protestant teachers who had obtained their ITE outside NI and none had gained their teaching qualification in the Republic of Ireland.

Cultural Encapsulation

Five criteria were identified as exposing the incremental pattern of community consistent choices that contributed to the formation of the culturally encapsulated teacher: Teachers who were teaching in a community consistent school (as defined by the primary school that they had attended) that *had also*… attended a community consistent post-primary school *and had*… attended a community consistent ITE college in NI *and had*… undertaken teaching practice only in community consistent schools *and had*… only ever been employed in community consistent schools (Figure 2).

Of the 398 teachers who completed the survey and were working in Controlled schools and non-denominational grammars:

- 77% (n=308) had been educated in Controlled primary schools.
- 75% (n=300) had also attended a Controlled post-primary school or non-denominational voluntary grammar.
- 34% (n=135) had also attended Stranmillis University College.

- 28% (n=110) had also undertaken teaching practice *only* in Controlled schools or non-denominational grammars
- 22% (n=89) had also *only ever* taught in Controlled schools or non-denominational grammars
    - 79% (n=70) of these were teaching in Controlled primary schools
    - 21% (n=19) were teaching in Controlled post-primary or non-denominational grammar schools

Thus, 22% of teachers in Controlled schools (including **38%** of teachers in primary schools and **9%** of teachers in post-primary schools) could be considered to be culturally encapsulated (see Figure 3).

A further 407 teachers who completed the online survey were working in Maintained schools and Catholic voluntary grammars.

- 85% (n=345) of those teaching in Maintained schools and Catholic voluntary grammars had been educated in Maintained primary schools in NI
- 82% (n=335) had also attended Maintained post-primary or Catholic voluntary grammar schools
- 40% (n=162) had also attended St Mary's ITE college
- 39% (n=158) had also undertaken teaching practice *only* in Maintained schools or Catholic voluntary grammars
- 33% (n=133) had also *only ever* taught in Maintained schools or Catholic voluntary grammars
    - 67% (n=90) of these were teaching in primary schools
    - 33% (n=43) were teaching in post-primary schools

By applying these sequential filters, it was determined that 33% of teachers in Catholic schools (**48%** of teachers in primary schools and **19%** of teachers in post-primary schools) could be considered to be culturally encapsulated (see Figure 4).

Teachers who cross the divide

A proportion of teachers were identified as having stepped outside of their community of origin (and the familiarity afforded by a culturally encapsulated career) in order to work

in a school that has a different community profile to the one in which they received their own education. It was calculated that 17% (n=169) of teachers who completed the survey had crossed out of the sector associated with their community of origin.

Data was analysed in respect of four specific cross-over groups: Protestant teachers in Maintained and Catholic voluntary grammar schools, Protestant teachers in Integrated schools, Catholic teachers in Controlled and non-denominational voluntary grammar schools, and Catholic teachers in Integrated schools. The resulting data was then further interrogated to identify variations between those cross-over teachers employed in primary schools, post-primary (non-grammar) schools and grammar schools.

Six percent (n=26) of the 428 teachers who had been educated in Controlled primary schools were recorded as working in Catholic schools. Four of these were working in Maintained primary schools, eleven in the Maintained post-primary sector and eleven in Catholic voluntary grammars. Of these twenty-six teachers, four (including one of those working in the primary sector) had gone on to attend a Catholic school following their transfer from primary education. Given the very low numbers of Protestant pupils recorded in Maintained post-primary and Catholic voluntary grammar schools (1%) and the comparatively higher number of Catholic pupils distributed across a small number of Controlled primary schools (7%) (Department of Education, 2018) it is possible, and perhaps even likely, that these future-teachers were returning to a school in their community of origin following a primary school sojourn on the Controlled side.

In the responses received to the online survey, 11% (n=54) of the 482 teachers who had been educated in Maintained primary schools identified as being employed in de facto Protestant schools. Twenty-four percent (n=13) of these were employed in Controlled primary schools and 76% (n=41) were employed in post-primary schools – 22 in non-selective Controlled schools and 19 in non-denominational grammars.

As had been observed with the Protestant-to-Catholic cross-over teachers, not all of the Catholic-to-Protestant teachers had travelled a community consistent path throughout their own education: Two of the Catholic-to-Protestant cross-over teachers had transferred from a Maintained primary school to a Controlled post-primary school, a

further five to a non-denominational grammar and three to a post-primary in the Integrated sector.

The numbers of Protestant teachers who had gained employment in Integrated schools was more substantial than those who had crossed the divide in education between the two dominant communities – survey respondents included 94 Protestant-to-Integrated teachers but only 26 Protestant-to-Catholic. All but one of these 94 had followed a community consistent path through their own compulsory education.

Seventy-seven teachers who had received their formative education in Catholic primary schools were recorded as being employed in Integrated schools: 95% (n=73) had taken a wholly community consistent school path. Three had attended a non-denominational grammar and one had transferred to an Integrated secondary.

Discussion

NI remains divided. This division is reflected, and potentially replicated, by an education system that revolves principally around two mutually exclusive identity axes – Catholic-Irish and British-Protestant. Only 7% of pupils attend unaligned, integrated schools (Department of Education, 2018). Within the community-defined sectors the majority of pupils are unlikely to be taught by a teacher from outside their own ethnic grouping – this is particularly apparent in Maintained primary schools. This separation is supported by policies on the place of religion in schools, the separation of ITE institutions and the exception of teachers from fair employment legislation.

The demographic profile of NI has changed and continues to change – education has been slow to respond. Whilst multi-faith approaches have been adopted in the rest of the UK, the pre-eminence of Christianity in NI schools has been retained (Barnes, 2018). The prominence of religiosity in Catholic schools is underpinned by an additional qualification that is completed by many Catholic teachers during their ITE. In 2013 DE determined that the CRE requirement did not constitute an inequality of opportunity. However, this research has shown that the 'chill factor' that was understood to have maintained the sectoral separation of teachers by religion/community background (Dunn and Gallagher, 2003) would appear to have thawed to some extent. This change was most

evident in non-denominational voluntary grammar schools and least apparent in the Maintained primary sector were the cultural encapsulation of teachers was also observed as being more prevalent than in other types of school.

The CRE is a uni-directional employment barrier that has effectively excluded non-Catholics from employment in Maintained primary schools; given that 85% of primary school teachers are female (GTCNI, 2018), this restriction disproportionately impacts women's employment opportunities. Further research into the experiences of the small number of those Protestant teachers who have completed the CRE and have gone on to teach in a Maintained school could throw light onto the value and efficacy of this additional qualification.

A proposed overhaul of the current structures of ITE (Sahlberg et al, 2014) failed to gather the required bi-partisan support and has been shelved. In the assumption that change is unlikely to occur at any time soon, debate needs to take place around how the formation of teacher identities during pre-service training may shape subsequent practice.

This research has shown that, in any given sector, as many as half of the teachers employed have had little or no professional engagement across the community divide; they have remained community consistent throughout their entire education and career. It is difficult to imagine any other profession with a similar level of cultural encapsulation. Paradoxically, education has been identified as a key mechanism for reconciliation in NI. In 2013, the NI Executive committed to ensuring that "sharing in education" would become "a central part of every child's educational experience" (NI Executive, 2013, 48). In 2016, the Shared Education Act superseded a slew of earlier educational legislation and policy aimed at improving community relations. In a time of austerity, funds were offered to those schools willing to cross the sectoral divide and work alongside one another to enhance both learning and reconciliation outcomes.

Exploring controversial and contentious issues is widely recognised as being important in education for reconciliation (e.g. McKeown and Taylor, 2017) but research with pupil-participants on shared education projects identified that divisive issues are rarely explored (Loader and Hughes, 2015). A recent inspection report identified that many teachers involved in Shared Education programmes lacked the necessary confidence to engage

with issues relating to the enduring community separation (ETI, 2018). "Ongoing avoidance of these issues might reduce opportunities to build trust, deconstruct stereotypes and critically examine questions of identity and social justice" (Loader and Hughes, 2017). Further research is needed to ascertain if the cultural encapsulation identified contributes to this diffidence to tackle contentious issues in the classroom.

Conclusion

It has been shown here that an increased number of teachers have gained employment outside of their own community than had been observed in previous investigations (Darby et al, 1977; ECNI, 2004) – this movement is particularly evident in the post-primary and grammar sectors. Further qualitative research with those that have taken this untraditional route could be revealing of the motivations and experiences of those who cross-over.

The profile of teacher deployment in NI has changed. In a post-conflict, increasingly multi-cultural society the FETO exception appears to be something of an anachronism. Its retention had been argued as being required as a counterbalance to the CRE to protect Protestant teachers' opportunities on their *own side* (ECNI, 2004). The aspiration of ensuring equality is not well served by off-setting one restrictive policy against another or by justifying enduring discrimination on the basis of mutual disadvantage.

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	Maintained Primary	Maintained Post Primary	Catholic Voluntary Grammar
Darby et al, 1977	< 1%	2%	1%
ECNI, 2004[iv]	2%	2%	1%

Table 1: Protestant teachers employed in Maintained schools and Catholic voluntary grammars

	Controlled Primary	Controlled Post Primary	Non-Denominational Voluntary Grammar
Darby et al, 1977	< 1%	2%	1%
ECNI, 2004	5%	5%	1%

Table 2: Catholic teachers employed in Controlled schools and non-denominational grammars

Figure 1. ITE institutions in GB attended by teachers from NI.

ITE Institutions attended by Catholic teachers	ITE Institutions attended by Protestant teachers
	

Figure 2: Teachers and the cycle of replication of community division in NI education

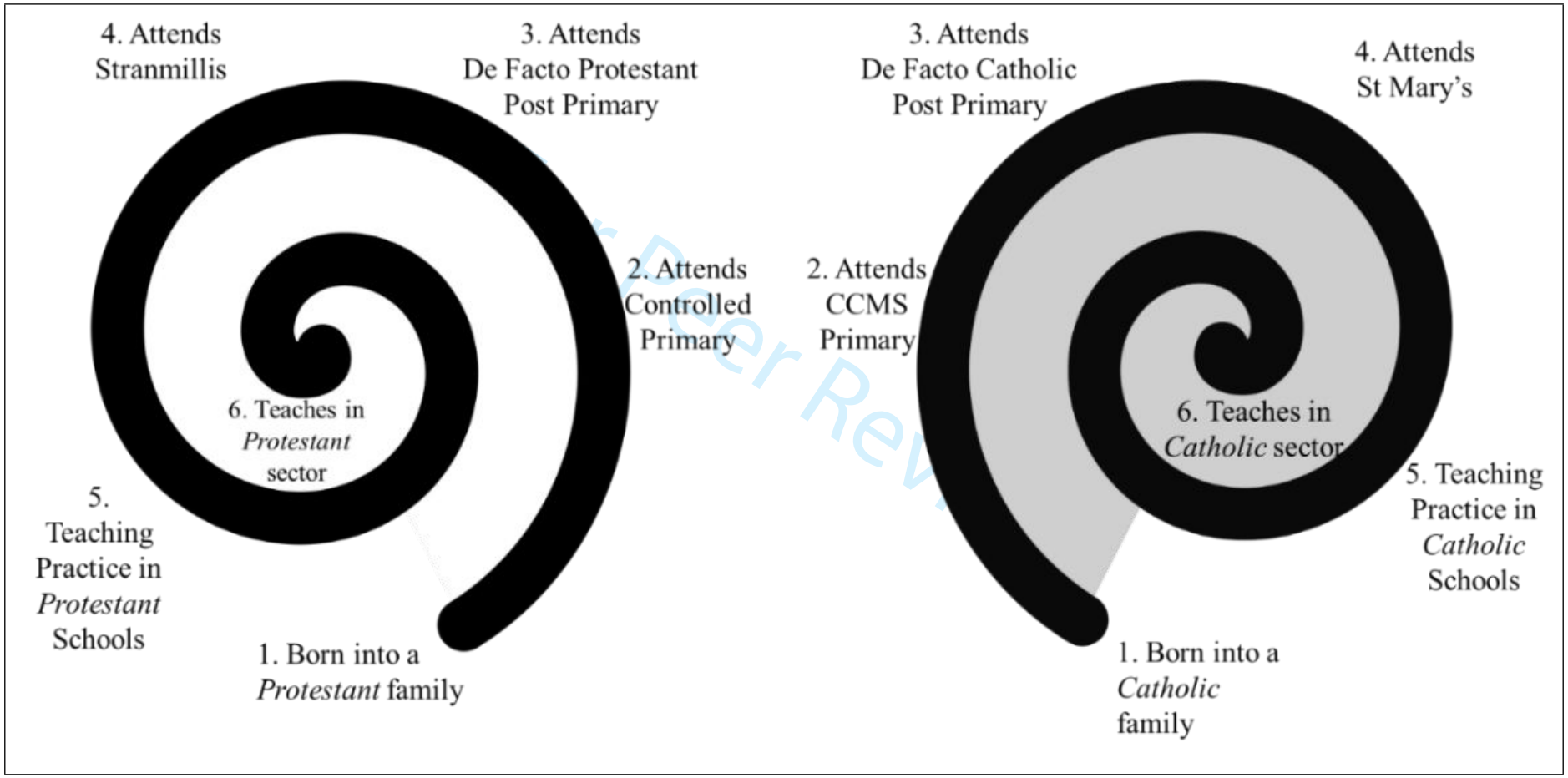


Figure 3. Community consistency and professional cultural encapsulation in Controlled schools and non-denominational grammar schools

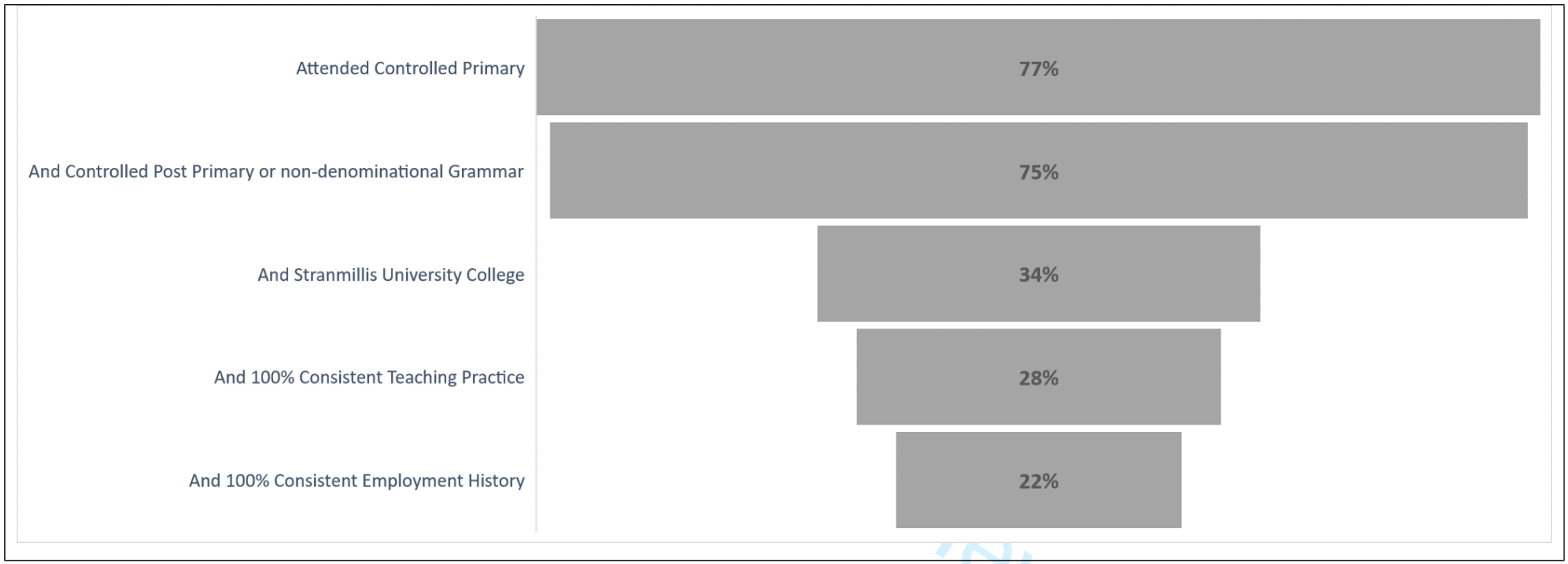
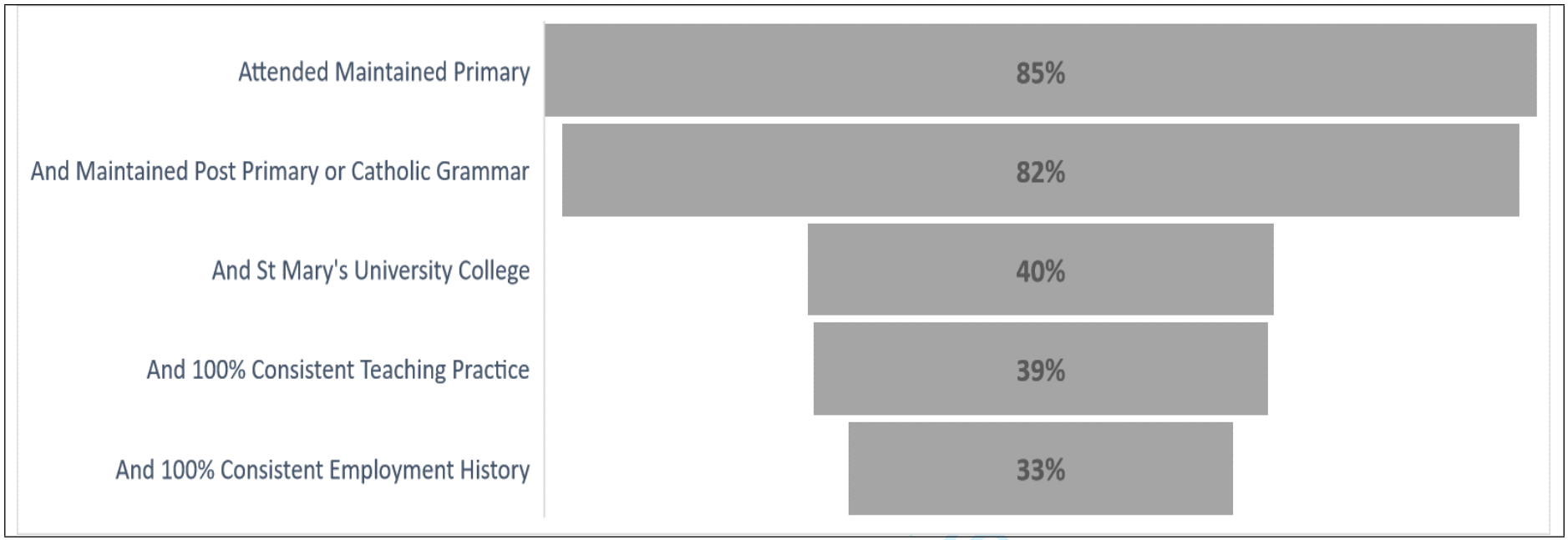


Figure 4. Community consistency and professional cultural encapsulation in Maintained and Catholic grammar schools



[i] Shuttleworth and Lloyd (2009) considered a housing development to be 'Single identity' if more than 80% of residents shared the same ethnic/religious community identity.

[ii] Whilst all teachers have a right to freedom of conscience under Article 9 of the ECHR it is generally accepted that all primary school teachers are expected to have a RE certificate.

[iii] St Mary's had been established in 1900 as a female teaching college; its male counterpart, St Joseph's merged with St Mary's in 1985 – survey results relating to these two institutions have been conflated in the data.

[iv] ECNI research provided a breakdown against only three categories: Controlled, Maintained and Voluntary Grammar. Primary and post primary figures have therefore been duplicated. The ECNI research had an additional identity categorisation 'undertermined'.